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SUBJECT: EMBLEM: AMBULANCE AND STATUTES UPDATE

1. (SBU) MFA Director of International Organizations Daniel Meron told poloff May 9 that the GOI has not yet adopted a position on the stationing of five additional ambulances of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in East Jerusalem. He twice replied to direct questions about the GOI view on this issue with the statement, "I don't have news on that yet." When asked about progress on implementing changes to Magen David Adom (MDA) statutes necessary for MDA to join the Red Cross / Red Crescent movement, Meron replied, "I was hoping you wouldn't ask. There is no conclusion yet on the matter."

2. (SBU) Meron also reported that the verification exercise conducted May 4 by Swiss Ambassador Didier Pfirter and the ICRC proved successful. Pfirter and the ICRC witnessed a PRCS ambulance test the "fast lanes" established by the GOI to accelerate passage of PRCS ambulances through Israeli checkpoints. Meron said that Pfirter told him that the PRCS ambulance used as a test case had moved rapidly through a checkpoint from Ramallah into East Jerusalem. (Note: Meron also reported that Israeli police stopped the PRCS ambulance while it was driving in East Jerusalem, to ask the drivers what they were doing there. Meron said that MDA ambulance drivers on the scene explained the new GOI policy to the police officers. End note.)

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